

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of data retrieval by a user from a distributed database, comprising:

saving metadata pertaining to real data stored in databases distributed on a network in first servers distributed on said network associated with each of said databases;

collecting metadata saved in said first servers and storing said metadata in a metadata database of a second server without storing the real data represented by said metadata;

extracting metadata that matches a user retrieval request by searching metadata stored in said metadata database;

inputting a retrieval condition for the database on the basis of a retrieval result of the metadata for said metadata database;

issuing a real data retrieval request from the user to the first server indicated by the extracted metadata,

wherein said real data retrieval request is issued by bypassing said second server; and

retrieving, by the first server, the real data from the corresponding database in accordance with the real data retrieval request.

2. A computer-readable recording medium recording a program for making a computer implement, in a database system comprising one or more user terminals on a distributed network, one or more distributed databases, one or more first servers for searching the one or more distributed databases for real data, and one or more second servers for collecting metadata which pertain to real data stored in the one or more distributed databases from the one or more first servers, the functions of:

saving metadata of the distributed databases in said first servers;

collecting metadata saved in said first servers and storing them in a metadata database of said second servers;

extracting metadata which matches a retrieval request from a user by search of the

collected metadata in response to the retrieval request;

inputting a retrieval condition for the databases at the user terminal on the basis of a retrieval result of the metadata, and issuing, by bypassing said second servers containing said metadata database, a retrieval request of the real data to the first server indicated by the extracted metadata; and

retrieving the real data by the first server in accordance with the retrieval request.

3. A computer-readable recording medium recording a program for making a computer implement, in a database system built by distributing on a network one or more databases, one or more first servers for searching the databases for real data, and one or more second servers different from the first servers, the functions of:

collecting and managing the metadata by the second server from the one or more first servers by acquiring metadata by the second server when the metadata which is saved in the first server and pertains to the database has been updated, and

retrieving the real data by the first server in accordance with a retrieval request, wherein the updated metadata is used to directly retrieve the real data by the first server while bypassing the second server.

4. A computer-readable recording medium recording a program for making a computer implement, in a database system built by distributing on a network one or more databases, one or more first servers for searching the databases for real data, and one or more second servers different from the first servers, the functions of:

collecting and managing the metadata by the second server from the one or more first servers by acquiring metadata which is saved in the first server and pertains to the database at a predetermined time interval, and

retrieving the real data pertaining to the predetermined time interval by the first server in accordance with a retrieval request, wherein the saved metadata is used to directly retrieve the real data by the first server while bypassing the second server.

5. A computer-readable recording medium recording a program for making a computer implement, in a database system built by distributing on a network one or more user terminals, one or more databases, one or more first servers for searching the databases for real data, and one or more second servers for collecting metadata which pertain to real data stored in the one or more databases from the one or more first servers and managing the collected metadata, the functions of:

extracting metadata which matches a retrieval request from the user terminal from the second server by search in response to the retrieval request;

inputting a retrieval condition for retrieving real data from the database using a retrieval result of the metadata; and

transferring the input retrieval condition to the first server indicated by the extracted metadata as a retrieval request, while bypassing the second server.

6. A computer-readable recording medium recording a program for making a computer implement, in a database system built by distributing on a network one or more databases, and one or more first servers for searching the databases for real data, the functions of:

saving, by the first server, metadata which pertains to the database managed by that first server, and providing the metadata in response to an external request;

converting a retrieval request sent from a user terminal connected to the network to said first server into a format which is concordant with the database to be accessed; and

directly retrieving the real data from the database in response to the converted retrieval request.